

PEARLS FROM SOLI·DIVINATION BY SHADOWS ≠ MARCO POLO

TA over their *right* shoulder and then tie it under¹ the other arm so that the thread of
 Z LT cotton comes *to be seen* in front of their breast and by the back. And they are all
 V known by this token through all the places where they go *through all the world*.
 Moreover I tell you that they have a king rich and mighty in treasure. And this
 V FB king buys *many pearls of great value* and all other precious stones very gladly.
 Moreover he has agreed with all the merchants of his land that for all the pearls
 which they bring him from the kingdom of Maabar which is called Soli;² and this
 Z Z is the best province *and the richest* and the most civilized that is *to be found* in Indie
 V and where the best pearls of *the world* are found; that he will give them for them³
 Z V twice as much as they buy them for. *And these merchant Braaman go for this* to the
 FB kingdom of Maabar and buy all the good pearls which they find & *can obtain* and
 then bring them to their king and say [83d] by their truth what they cost. And the
 king immediately makes one give them twice as much for them as that which they
 cost, nor did less ever come to them from it. And for this reason they have brought
 FB him very good and large ones in very great quantities, *so that he has very great treasure*
 R VL of them. These Braaman are *great idolaters* and *pay great attention to the art of divination*
 Z and go more by augury and by actions *and movements* of beasts and of birds than
 any men in the world. And so I will tell you of them a part of those things which
 VB Z they do with it. I tell you that *among the rest* they have such a custom *as this* among
 VB them. For on *the names* of all the days of the week they have set a sign such as I
 VB VA shall tell you. *And if it happened* that they were *to wish* to make any purchase of
 VB any merchandise, *immediately* he who wishes to buy it rises erect and looks at his
 VB shadow in the sun and says, What is to day? Such an one. *And considers the sign*
 VB *which the current day has*, and he has his shadow measured for them⁴ *in the sun*, how long
 FB it is. And if *he sees* his shadow is as long as it ought to be on that day he finishes
 FB the purchase *immediately*, and if the shadow is not⁵ so long as it ought to be he does

¹ *sour* Z: *sub* so probably read *sout* TA seems to be the only text which defines the shoulder, and is mistaken, for the thread passes over the left shoulder and under the right arm as I learn from the Rev. C. E. SELL and from a photograph kindly shown me by Mrs. LL. PRICE of Guilden Morden. FA,FB,VA,P,V,VL omit altogether; Z,L follow F; LT: *sub sinistra . . . sub alia*; VB says "over the shoulder and make it come forward under that arm and tie it underneath by the other arm."

² *qe sapelent soli* V: *che vien apela sali* Z p. lxxxi. Others omit. See PN.

³ *quil endra lor* Perhaps *quil rendra lor* or, as B., *quil en dora lor*

⁴ & *dit qe ior hui le tel lor fait mesurer lonbre soe* Z (p. lxxxii) on the whole supports the version. V omits.

⁵ FB: *et si ont entre eulz vng jour en la sepmaine establi la ou il font vne merueilleuse chose, car cellui*
 jour